

## Book Reviews

### **Care & Evidence: helping to promote effective care for, and collection of best evidence from, people who have been sexually assaulted. Home Office/The NHS**

This is a DVD prepared for teaching purposes by the Metropolitan Police in London and The Haven, a Sexual Assault Referral Centre, established under the auspices of King's College Hospital.

The object of this training is to increase the conviction rate of alleged rapists which is now down to about 5% and to try and ensure that reporting the incident is as little traumatic as possible to the victim.

It is important to remember that the majority of the victims are female but there are male victims and they often find it more difficult to talk.

The DVD is divided into two halves, as the name would suggest, 'Care' and 'Evidence'.

The important factor to note from the start is that the DVD is aimed at those health professionals who do not specialise in this field and come across the problem as part of their job.

The 'Care' part of the programme starts by showing some potential circumstances with examples being demonstrated. There is stress on the need for co-operation between services and how to provide immediate care with the Sexual Assault Referral Centre (SARC) such as 'The Haven' as the place to go to as soon as practical. They have the facilities to provide the totality of care that is needed.

Initially, victims are 'usually seen by non-specialist police officers and doctors. Care is handed over as soon as their aspect has been dealt with.

Four elements are emphasised and discussed. They are: Listen, Believe, Do not judge and Help.

There is a sequence of priorities given: Treatment of injuries, Collection of Evidence, Contraception. Search

for and treatment of infection including HIV, Psychosocial support – GP, counselling, etc., Confidentiality and choice of subsequent action, Safety – the best choice involves police officers.

It is important that if the point of first contact is the SARC, all aspects can be covered by them.

The collection of evidence is based on Lockard's Principle and is aimed at serving two purposes. Who was the perpetrator and was there Sexual Assault.

The police collect evidence to determine What happened?, 'when?', Where? And by whom?

It demonstrates how to collect the early samples of evidence, the mouth swab and the urine and what to do with these specimens.

An SARC or a forensic physician then completes the examination.

The DVD provides an excellent teaching module for non-forensically trained health professionals. It shows how to cope with the presenting victim in Accident and Emergency and how to care for them without losing evidence. The need for a specialist – medical and police if wanted – is the next step as demonstrated.

My only criticism was of the court scene, which was unconvincing and somewhat unrealistically flawed – for example: the judge wore no wig or gown, the courtroom looked very empty and no jury was seen.

Stephen Hempling  
*Forensic Physician*

28 Tongdean Avenue,  
Hove, East Sussex BN3 6TN,  
United Kingdom

Tel.: +44 1273 555 382; fax: +44 1273 556 093

E-mail address: [shempling2@aol.com](mailto:shempling2@aol.com)

URL: [www.careandevidence.org](http://www.careandevidence.org)

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### **Drugs and Poisons in Humans. A Handbook of Practical Analysis. Osamu Suzuki, Kanako Watanabe (Eds.). Springer (2005). 660pp., ISBN: 3540222774**

The preface to this book states that "The most important aim . . . is to provide the most reliable and reproducible methods for analysis of drugs and poisons; therefore the newest methods and the ones requiring skills have not been

adopted." It also states that the editors do not claim that the book covers all compounds to be analysed and that they are well aware of its limitations. It is useful if the reader bears this in mind when using this book.

The first, small, section of the book contains what are termed "Chapters of general nature" which includes body samples, alternative specimens, general information concerning detection methods, problems in analysis in cases